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PROGRAM Eyewitness News at 5:00 STATION WDVM TV  
DATE June 23, 1982 5:30 PM CITY Washington, DC  
SUBJECT President Reagan Signs Spy Bill

J.C. HAYWARD: In a ceremony at CIA headquarters today, President Reagan signed into law legislation making it illegal to expose the identities of US spies. And the President praised the agency as the silent service whose work is not appreciated and not rewarded.

Eyewitness News correspondent Kent Jarrell reports.

KENT JARRELL: President Reagan was taken on a short tour of CIA headquarters, and addressed several hundred undercover agents inside the building, away from cameras and reporters. Outside, the President was applauded by hundreds of other CIA employees.

The President urged special vigilance because the Soviet Union, suffering from internal decay, feels the need for imperialistic expansion and foreign adventure. And he praised CIA employees as heroes of a grim twilight struggle.

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN: It is upon your intellect and integrity, your wit and intuition that the fate of freedom rests for millions of your countrymen and for many millions more all around the globe. You are the trip-wire across which the forces of repression and tyranny must stumble in their quest for global domination. You, the men and women of the CIA, are the eyes and ears of the free world.

JARRELL: The President, again to applause, signed the legislation making it a federal crime to disclose the names of secret agents. The penalty, up to ten years in jail and up to a fifty thousand dollar fine.

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-2-

The American Civil Liberties Union criticizes the law as an unconstitutional infringement on the right of free speech. The President called the legislation a vote of confidence in the CIA by the American people.

PRESIDENT REAGAN: It's law.

JARRELL: I'm Kent Jarrell, Eyewitness News.